



BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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BCAFN SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY

February 26 & 27, 2025

Online via Zoom

Resolution 05/2025

**SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR THE BC FIRST NATIONS CLIMATE LEADERSHIP AGENDA
RECOMMENDATIONS AND FINAL REPORT**

Moved BY: CHIEF JERRY JACK, MOWACHAHT/MUCHALAHT FIRST NATION

SECONDED BY: SEMPYULAN STEWART GONZALES, PROXY, SQUAMISH FIRST NATION

DECISION: CARRIED

WHEREAS:

- A. The climate crisis poses a severe threat to the well-being of First Nations in BC, endangering their sovereignty, inherent rights and Treaty rights, safety, culture, and way of life through escalating climate-exacerbated disasters and the degradation of their traditional territories, which sustain all life;
- B. Despite the escalating climate emergency, Canada continues to fail to meet climate targets and commitments while greenhouse emissions persistently rise;
- C. Canadian climate and environmental policies are deeply disconnected from First Nations' worldviews and ways of knowing and being, perpetuating systemic harm and ineffective solutions. This deep misalignment and climate-related policy failure underscores the urgent need for transformational change;
- D. First Nations in BC are climate leaders, and their full participation through mutually developed policy and legislative reform processes that upholds First Nations' inherent, constitutionally

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protected and Treaty rights is integral to transformative climate action. However, Crown governments climate policy, legislation, programs, and investments often fail to reflect First Nations' needs due to a lack of meaningful participation in the development and implementation process;

- E. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the UN Declaration), which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification, and has, alongside the government of BC, committed to implementing through legislation, affirms:

Article 8: (1) Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture; (2) States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for: (a) Any action which has the aim or effect of depriving them of their integrity as distinct peoples, or of their cultural values or ethnic identities; (b) Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources; (d) Any form of forced assimilation or integration;

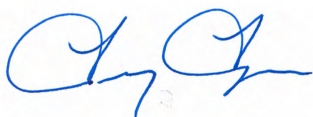
Article 18: Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which affect their rights through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own Indigenous decision-making institutions;

Article 19: States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them;

Article 25: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired. (2): Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired. (3): States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the Indigenous peoples concerned.

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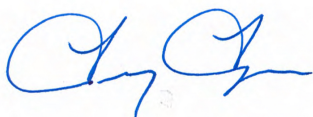
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Article 29 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

Article 32: (1): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources. (2): States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources. (3): States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact;

- F. In 2015, the government of Canada committed to working with provinces, territories, First Nations, the Métis Nation, Inuit groups and church entities to fully implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. This commitment included starting with the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Call to Action 43).
- G. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly passed various resolutions supporting First Nations-led climate action and leadership, such as Resolution 05/2021: Supporting First Nations Community-Based Climate Leadership; Resolution 31/2016: Climate Change-Adaptive Planning, and Resolution 30/2016: Respect and Recognition of Indigenous Rights in Canada's Climate Change Planning, which call on the Government of Canada to establish a National Indigenous Climate Action Plan in cooperation with First Nations;
- H. By BCAFN Resolution 04/19, the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly directed the BCAFN to work with the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) to prepare a First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan (BC FN Climate Strategy), which was supported and endorsed by the BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly through BCAFN Resolution 06/2022;
- I. The Government of Canada committed to co-developing an Indigenous Climate Leadership Agenda (ICLA) in the *Strengthened Climate Plan* and Budget 2022. The ICLA was designed to include distinctions-based agendas that build regional and national capacity and progressively vests authorities and resources for climate action in the hands of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and representative organizations;

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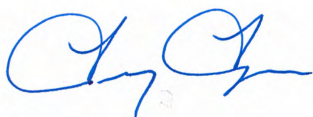
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- J. By AFN Resolution 25/2024, the First Nations-in-Assembly directed the AFN to support First Nations Regional Leads and First Nations leadership, in the design, development, and articulation of the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda;
- K. First Nation regional leads were appointed from across Canada, with the support of the Assembly of First Nations, to work in collaboration with Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada to co-develop the First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda (FNCL) Agenda;
- L. The FNCL Agenda aims to provide a roadmap for federal climate policy that upholds self-determination, First Nations' inherent, constitutionally protected, and Treaty rights, empowers First Nations in climate governance, and ensures federal support is aligned with Canada's obligations;
- M. By BCAFN Resolution 03/2023, the Chiefs-in-Assembly directed the BCAFN to collaboratively facilitate the co-development of the FNCL Agenda in BC with title and rights holders and First Nations organizations across the province and to use the FNCL Agenda co-development process to strengthen the implementation of the BC FN Climate Strategy;
- N. BCAFN technical staff developed the draft BC FNCL Agenda High-Level Recommendations, which was informed by and built off of the BC FN Climate Strategy. The recommendations and costing were informed by in-depth research, engagement sessions, and the guidance and wisdom of Spiritual Knowledge Keepers and the BC FNCL Agenda Steering Committee;
- O. The BCAFN submitted the draft BC FNCL Agenda High-Level Recommendations to the federal government in September 2024 to inform both the Canada-wide ICLA Memorandum to Cabinet and a Treasury Board submission to enable implementation; and
- P. The BC FNCL Agenda Final Report entitled, *"From Vision to Action: Advancing BC First Nations Climate Leadership"* is built on foundational First Nations-led climate work and engagement in BC to date. The report outlines eleven (11) key themes and twenty-four (24) interconnected recommendations to enable transformational change to address the climate and environmental crisis, achieve Canada's climate goals, support and uplift First Nations-led climate leadership and action and protect Mother Earth.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- 1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly fully endorse the BC First Nations Climate Leadership Agenda (BC FNCL Agenda) and the recommendations as presented in the BC First Nations Climate Leadership (FNCL) Agenda Final Report;

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2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly mandate the BCAFN to fully implement the BC FNCL Agenda Final Report recommendations in coordination with the implementation of the BC First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan;
3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the Regional Chief to advocate to the Government of Canada to urgently prioritize federal climate policy reform that upholds and respects First Nations' rights, title, and interests and is in full alignment with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action;
4. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call upon the provincial and federal government to provide adequate resources and to work collaboratively with BCAFN and relevant partner organizations to implement the BC FNCL Agenda recommendations; and
5. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly mandates the Regional Chief to advocate for ongoing engagement, collaboration, and co-implementation of the BC FNCL Agenda recommendations in all federal climate policy, programs and legislation with rights and title holders.

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